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RECENT COVERAGE OF TWO NORTH VIETNAMESE SAM SITES WITH MODIFIED FAN SONG RADARS SUGGESTS A NEW POSSIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION IN DETERMINING THE OPERATING MODE OF THESE MODIFIED RADARS.

AT HAIPHONG SAM SITE B23-2 (VN 346) ON PHOTOGRAPHY OF [REDACTED] AND HANOI SAM SITE A17A-2 (VN 45) [REDACTED] THE BOX-LIKE STRUCTURES ATOP BOTH RADARS WERE OPENED AT THE RIGHT REAR CORNER AND A LIGHT-TONED OBJECT WAS VISIBLE IN THE OPENING. THIS OBJECT MAY BE A BRACING MEMBER OR SOME TYPE OF EQUIPMENT, HOWEVER IN BOTH CASES (PRIMARILY VN 45) THE OBJECT BEARS SOME RESEMBLANCE TO AN INDIVIDUAL SEATED WITHIN THE STRUCTURE AGAINST THE REAR WALL. CONSIDERING THE POSITION OF THIS OBJECT OR INDIVIDUAL, THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE ROOM FOR A SECOND INDIVIDUAL SEATED IN THE LEFT REAR CORNER OF THE STRUCTURE, CREATING AN ARRANGEMENT MUCH LIKE THE COCKPIT OF A SMALL AIRCRAFT.

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IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS IN FACT SEATED WITHIN THE STRUCTURE, HE MAY BE MANNING AN OPERATOR POSITION OR MAKING EQUIPMENT ADJUSTMENTS. IF THIS IS AN OPERATOR POSITION, IT RAISES THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE STRUCTURE ON THE MODIFIED FAN SONG MAY BE SOME TYPE OF OPTICAL OR MAN-OPERATED TRACKING UNIT.

WHILE THIS IDENTIFICATION IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN, WE CONSIDER THIS POSSIBILITY WORTH MENTION. COMMENTS ARE INVITED.

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--END OF MESSAGE--

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